



Center for Medicaid and State Operations
Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group

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FROM: Glenn Stanton
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Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group (DEHPG)

SUBJECT: Quality in Home and Community-Based Services:

TO: State Medicaid Directors
HCBS Waiver contacts

This letter is the first in a series of communications over the next several months on quality in home and community-based services (HCBS). These communications will inform you of current CMS efforts, new technical assistance products, and future CMS activities related to improving HCBS quality.

As most of you are aware, HHS Secretary Thompson responded to a letter from Senator Grassley and Senator Breaux on July 31, 2003, pledging his continued commitment to ensuring the availability of home and community-based services and to quality outcomes through CMS monitoring and oversight of the design of HCBS programs. Included with the Secretary's letter, which I attach with this communication, is a plan that highlights CMS actions in relation to quality improvement in HCBS programs.

You will see from the action plan that CMS has set forth an ambitious schedule. Among other actions, CMS plans to issue new tools to states, conduct dialogue with and issue procedural guidance to our regional offices that conduct monitoring reviews, and work with state associations to identify refinements to the HCBS waiver application template and annual reports from states. In addition, CMS is committed to identifying and issuing *Promising Practices* reports on effective methods used by states to address key components of their quality management system. Many of these actions are already well underway.

I am very pleased to make you aware of a special series of reports recently posted on the CMS website at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/promisingpractices/hcbsquality.asp>. These reports are entitled *HCBS Quality Briefs*. They are intended to highlight specific products in six states that support their respective quality management systems. The briefs summarize the underlying state program and quality management system, as well as relay key State contact information. I appreciate the six states (Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Wisconsin) willing to share aspects of their program, and hope you will find the reports useful as you consider refinements to your own quality management system.

I encourage you to review the Secretary's letters to Senators Grassley and Breaux, and to review the accompanying action plan. It will set the stage for upcoming discussions as we proceed in our quality efforts with you as our partners.

Again, I look forward to regular communications with you in the coming months.